

Mr. Sangster's New Poems in England & Scotland.

So far as the European reviews of Mr. Charles Sangster's new Volume of Poems have come to hand they are as flattering as could possibly be expected. The London Athenæum, which is down on everything American, and who would naturally expect very little poetic excellence to come out of Canada, or any other of the colonial Nazareth, has a favorable critique, and does not, according to its usual custom, demolish the volume for mere recreation. The London Saturday Analyst and Leader reviews "Hesperus" very favorably.—"Western Canada," says the reviewer, "boasts of a new poet who has delighted to sing of the St. Lawrence and the Saguenay, and who, in the spirit of Wordsworth, has communed with the genius of the lofty hills and mighty waters in the presence of which he has lived, and derived from them an intelligence which has blended with his own, reconciling his heart and mind, or rather identifying them with the character of the scene. And now, with his credentials accumulated and ratified, he comes forth again, attired in his singing robes, and calls on the world admiringly to listen. And it will listen; though Mr. Sangster is far from being a faultless poet. Like the sun, he has numerous specks in his orb, but he shines brightly, nevertheless. His new volume is one of exceeding beauty. It is almost entirely lyrical. In the early poems he seeks to "touch the firmament of starry Thought," but sometimes he does more—he would transcend it. In his "Hesperus, a Legend of the Stars," he soars bravely; but he is not always intelligible. Nor does he appear to conceive it possible to be. Perhaps there is too much of subtle word-weaving in these initial poems: their spirit, however, cannot be too highly commended. There is a charming Tennysonian lyric, entitled, "Marilyne," whose bridal is celebrated with appropriate sweetness. A Cantata, "The Happy Harvesters," supplies some capital rustic songs and ballads. We have then a true Canadian Chant on "The Falls of the Chaudière," Ottawa. The lyrics welcoming the Prince of Wales are right hearty compositions. The poems, however, to which we would attract most attention are those forming a series under the title of "Into the Silent Land." They are, indeed, tenderly pathetic."

Crossing the channel, we come to the notice of the Glasgow Commonwealth, who has taken more trouble with his critique

than any of the papers nearer home (except the N.Y. Albion) and from whom something might have been expected: "In his volume" (says the Scottish Writer) "there is an undoubted facility, while there is a great variety of versification. There is much sincere appreciation of the beauties of poetical phraseology, best descriptive of mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, moonlight nights, and starry skies, and the fanciful influence which the picturesque holds over the mind, to which a kind of character, even charm of freshness, is given by the introduction occasionally of Canadian names of scenes and localities. There is also some fair thinking, and that amount of dreamy speculation on the life to come, and the things pertaining thereto, for which we all have a relish, and which goes so far to the making a book of modern poetry readable. Indeed, it could scarcely be a book of modern poetry without this ingredient, while a commendable spirit of religion, moreover, pervades the whole.—Beside such poets as Coventry Patmore and Charles Mackay, he may claim a place without any presumption. Probably there is no continuous poem in this volume equal to the 'Salamandrine,' but there are, nevertheless, several lyrics which we think quite up to the mark of any of the Doctor's. In proof of this compliment we may note the worthy 'Song for Canada,' the spirited song of 'The Snows,' and the light-hearted, happy song, which we quote, entitled 'Clara and I,' which has attraction and felicitous buoyancy. As specimens of the author's decided successes, the highly-thought, and truly original poem called 'The Mystery,' and the devotional lay, very beautiful, named 'My Prayer,' may be particularized. 'England's Hope and England's Heir,' also quite redeems a twaddling class of ballads, remarkable for little else, with but few rare exceptions, save fulsome adulation and false prediction." Other notices there may be that have not, and never may, come to hand; but the quotations we have given are undoubted, and should be very flattering to the author. Were he a vain man, even these would spoil him; but he fully understands his mission, has great patience, and will assuredly bide his time.

* * In regard to the "Commonwealth's" comparison of Mr. Sangster's "word painting" with that of Leigh Hunt (omitted in the above) it so happens that Mr. S. has never read Leigh Hunt, which enhances the compliment not a little.